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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 9 July 2014 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

Today I write this letter to urgently appeal and call for international protection for the Palestinian people from the wrath of Israel's brutal and criminal military onslaught throughout the Occupied State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem. With rampant impunity, Israel, the occupying Power, continues to intensify its assaults against the besieged Gaza Strip, killing, wounding and maiming Palestinian civilians. Entire families and innocent children are being killed in their homes and in the streets, and houses are being destroyed atop civilians, who have nowhere to be safe from the Israeli aggression. The Palestinian death toll thus continues to rise, with at least 50 Palestinians killed by the Israeli occupying forces since Monday, 7 July, and more than 450 Palestinians, hundreds of them children, injured.

Today, 9 July, Israel, the occupying Power, launched another 160 airstrikes against civilian areas in Gaza, killing at least 21 Palestinians, including an elderly man, women and eight children, among them a 1-year-old, a 2-year-old, a 14-year-old and a 16-year-old. It has been reported that an Israeli airstrike on the Al-Maghazi refugee camp killed a family of three Palestine refugees, two children and their mother, and reports indicate that two other children are missing as a result of the same attack and are probably trapped under the rubble. In this regard, with refugees constituting the majority of the population in Gaza, where there are eight refugee camps, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has declared a state of emergency owing to the escalation of violence. In addition to those mentioned above, the following are the names of just some of the Palestinians killed today:

- Abdel Nasser Abu Kwaik (age 60) and his son Khaled Abu Kwaik (age 29) were killed in an airstrike on the al-Nuseirat camp;
- A woman, Nayfa Farajallah, was killed in an airstrike on Al-Mughraqa, south of Gaza City;

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- Rafiq Al-Kafarna (age 30) was killed when warplanes hit his motorcycle in Beit Lahia in north Gaza;
- Abdel Hadi Al-Soufi (age 24) was killed in the Al-Shoukeh neighbourhood in the southern Gaza Strip;
- Hatem Mohammed Abu Salem (age 25) was killed in a strike on his home in Beit Hanoun;
- A baby girl, Raneem Abdel Ghafour (age 1), was killed in an airstrike on her home in Al-Qarara north of Khan Younis;
- A small boy, Mohammed Malakeh (age 2), along with his mother, Hanaa' Malakeh, as well as Hatim Abu Salim were killed in an airstrike on their home in the Al-Zaitoun neighbourhood, southeast of Gaza City;
- Saher Hamdan (age 40) and her son Ibrahim (age 14) were killed in a strike on their home in Beit Hanoun;
- A mother from the Al-Nawasreh family and her two children were killed in an Israeli raid of their home in the Al-Mughazi camp;
- An entire family, Hafiz Mohammed Hamad (age 30), Ibrahim Mohammed Hamad (age 26), Mahdi Mohammed Hamad (age 46), Fawzia Khalil Hamad (age 62), Mehdi Hamad (age 16) and Suha Hamad (age 25), was killed in an airstrike on the family's home in Beit Hanoun, in the northern Gaza Strip;
- Hani Saleh Hamad (in his sixties) and his son Ibrahim (in his twenties) were killed in an airstrike on their home;
- An elderly woman, Salmiyya Al-Arja, and a child, Miryam Al-Arja, were killed in a strike on Rafah.

As more horrific reports pour in, the Palestinian leadership condemns in the strongest terms these war crimes and the State terrorism being perpetrated by Israel, the occupying Power, against the defenceless and unprotected Palestinian civilian population under its occupation. It should be recalled that article 147 of the Fourth Geneva Convention defines grave breaches as, inter alia, the wilful killing and inhuman treatment of protected persons; wilfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health of protected persons; and extensive destruction of property, carried out unlawfully and wantonly.

In addition to attacks on civilians, Israel has also bombed vital civilian infrastructure in Gaza. This includes the targeting of a sewage plant, which serves the Al-Shati refugee camp, the Tel Al-Hawa neighbourhood, Sheikh Ajlin and western Gaza City, and pumps 25,000 m^3 of wastewater daily to the public treatment plant. Israeli warplanes also bombed the waterline that provides water for the Al-Shati camp and serves more than 70,000 people. With water and wastewater infrastructure already under severe strain in the besieged Gaza Strip owing to the severe Israeli restrictions on the entry of construction materials necessary for repair and maintenance, the dire humanitarian conditions are worsening for the 1.7 million Palestinians living under Israel's occupation and imprisoned as a result of its illegal blockade of Gaza.

Moreover, Israeli reprisals against the Palestinian people continue in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, where the occupying forces continue to use

excessive force against civilians, causing death and injury to scores of Palestinians. I am compelled to further draw the international community's attention to the continuation of illegal actions by extremist and terrorist settlers that the occupying Power has illegally transferred to Palestinian land, in violation of international law, including the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Israeli settlers continue their hate-filled terror rampages, persisting with attacks on Palestinian civilians and the destruction of property. We condemn all of these crimes and reiterate that Israel, the occupying Power, is responsible for the actions of its settlers in the Occupied State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem, and that there must be accountability for their crimes.

As the situation on the ground grows more dire as a result of Israel's deliberate intent to spill more blood of innocent Palestinians, including children, we reiterate our urgent call to the Security Council to uphold its duties under the Charter of the United Nations and undertake the necessary action to bring an end to this Israeli aggression and to protect the Palestinian civilian population from this murderous and criminal rampage. Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable for its deliberate violations of international law and international humanitarian law, including its practice of extrajudicial executions and measures of collective punishment, and must be reined in by the international community. In this connection, the international community, in particular the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, is also duty-bound to ensure compliance by the occupying Power with the Convention, and cannot continue to sit idly by while Israel continues its crimes against the Palestinian people that it has occupied for 47 years.

We thus call for an emergency meeting of the Security Council to immediately consider this crisis situation and to act collectively to bring a halt to Israel's aggression and collective punishment of the Palestinian people throughout Occupied Palestine, particularly in the Gaza Strip, where at this moment the criminal, brutal Israeli onslaught is killing and maiming innocent Palestinian civilians.

This letter is in follow-up to our 504 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 8 July 2014 (A/ES-10/637-S/2014/479), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations